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# Tips on Finding Summer Jobs

When school lets out for the summer, young people all over Wisconsin and other states start looking for work. With so many people in the market, the competition for jobs is keen. Here are some suggestions that should improve your chances!

## When to Start

To give yourself the best chance for jobs in private industry, start looking in the late winter or early spring. Large businesses usually have personnel offices that will take your application early. Then check back with them regularly on your job prospects.

Often, you can get priority for their summer jobs by working part-time or Saturdays during the school year.

Small firms may not take applications until they are about ready to hire, but checking early will let employers know you are interested and you'll get a better idea of your prospects and the best time to apply.

## Be Prepared

A useful exercise to help you plan your job search is to write down what you think you have to offer an employer—any work or volunteer experience, plus what you have learned in or out of school that may be useful on a job.

For example, being good at a craft,

working around cars or machines, or helping children or working with people of all ages, should be listed.

Ask a teacher or counselor at school about jobs in your area, and how you can put your skills and talents to work. (Some schools offer special help through job placement programs which operate in the schools with Wisconsin Job Center cooperation.) Your school may be able to suggest fields that are right for you.

Keep a written record on hand for job interviews—include your work experiences, names and addresses of previous employers and organizations you've done volunteer work for, and a few personal references. Teachers and adult friends are good reference choices; don't list relatives. Always ask permission first before using anyone as a reference.

Wisconsin Job Centers offer a convenient, pocket-sized **Personal Data Record** form for you to use to record information needed to complete most job applications. Ask for a copy of form DWSJ-4937-P by the above title.

## Other job search publications

Networking  
(DWSJ-9455-P)  
Where to Look for Job Opportunities  
(DWSJ-9467-P)  
Want Ad Procedures  
(DWSJ-9530-P)

## Publications on related topics

### INTERVIEWING

Keys to Successful Interviewing  
(DWSJ-6951-P)  
Hidden Elements of Interviewing  
(DWSJ-9484-P)  
Informational Interviewing  
(DWSJ-9407-P)

### RESUMES, APPLICATIONS

Personal Data Record  
(DWSJ-4937-P)  
Thoughts on Resumes  
(DWSJ-4658-P)  
Resume Writing—A Basic Guide  
(DWSJ-9433-P)

DWSJ-5641-P (R. 07/2003)

## One Place to Begin

Your local Wisconsin Job Center is a good place to start looking for work. No fees are charged, and the office lists a wide variety of jobs available with employers in your area online at [www.dwd.state.wi.us/jobnet](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/jobnet).

The staff there will arrange job interviews for you whenever possible. If you are uncertain as to the kind of work you can or want to do, ask to see a job counselor—and don't wait until the last minute.

The Wisconsin Job Center serves employers and jobseekers of all ages.

Go to your nearest Wisconsin Job Center to fill out an application form or to seek job-finding help through special programs. To find the location nearest you:

- call toll-free **888/258-9966**
- visit [www.wisconsinjobcenter.org](http://www.wisconsinjobcenter.org), or
- see government listings in the telephone book under "**Wisconsin, State of**" or under "**Wisconsin Job Center.**"

## Other Places to Check

Tell everyone you know—friends, relatives, neighborhood employers—that you want summer work, and ask if they know of any openings or will let you know if they learn of any.

Current job openings are listed on JobNet, Wisconsin's single-largest source of job listings. You may explore openings using touch-screen technology in Wisconsin Job Centers, or visit JobNet.

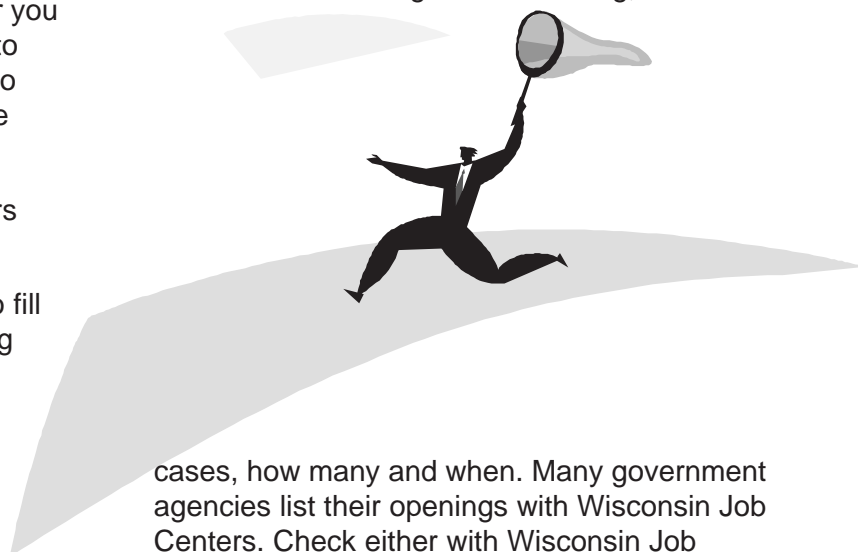
Read newspaper want ads. Watch bulletin boards and factory and store windows for help-wanted signs. Check with places that usually hire summer workers — camps, resorts, playgrounds, amusement parks, plant nurseries and farms, and ice cream and soft drink companies.

Another possibility is your "filling in" for a regular employee who is on vacation. Ask at such places as business offices, stores, factories, theaters, hotels, motels and hospitals.

Start early. It may give you priority over other

applicants. If your job search isn't successful at first, check back with employers two or three weeks after school is out; there may be vacancies because some youth quit or didn't work out.

State government also hires summer workers, with the individual agencies deciding, in most



cases, how many and when. Many government agencies list their openings with Wisconsin Job Centers. Check either with Wisconsin Job Center or the particular agency you're interested in.

The "Blue Book" of Wisconsin State Government, available in most libraries offers a complete state agency list. Or, visit [www.wisconsin.gov](http://www.wisconsin.gov).

There are only a limited number of summer positions available with the federal government. Application deadlines for these positions vary from agency to agency, and applications should be sent directly to the appropriate agency.

For federal job listings and further information, citizens in north-central Wisconsin should write the U.S. Office of Personnel Management at the Twin Cities Customer Service Office, One Federal Drive, Room 266, Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4007. Otherwise write the U.S. Office of Personnel Management at 230 S. Dearborn St., DPN 30-3, Chicago, IL 60604.

## Application Forms

Are you about ready to apply for a job? Many employers won't even schedule job interviews until they've received completed application forms. They often use these to "screen" jobseekers and to narrow the field of applicants

actually interviewed. Thus, an application form is more than just a way to apply for a job—it can be a test, as well.

Enough people have problems with application forms that Wisconsin Job Center has prepared a separate publication with advice on this single subject. It also contains a sample application form to familiarize you with what employers are likely to ask on forms.

To obtain it, ask in any Wisconsin Job Center for "**Avoid Application Form Errors**," publication DWSJ-5913-P.

### Job Interviews

Many tips on how to find job openings and prepare for job interviews are contained in publication DWSJ-6951-P, "**Keys to Successful Interviewing**," which Wisconsin Job Center offices offer. Here are some highlights:

- **Do some advance homework on the company you're interviewing with.** Ask the personnel or business office for printed material, consult an employee who works there, or check with your library. Knowledge of the company's history and jobs may help you decide what to say about yourself, and it may give a prospective employer a more favorable impression of you.
- **Practice interviews with a family member or friend**—especially one who has been successful in getting jobs and one who will be candid about your "trial run."
- **Take along your work record and names of references.** If you have a portfolio that is complete, take it with you.
- **Dress conservatively**—in a dress or dress pants and a blouse, or in trousers and a neat shirt. Do not wear "fad" or flamboyant clothes for most jobs. (For more advice, ask for a copy of publication DWSJ-4814-P, "**Grooming for Employment**.")
- **Report for your interview on time—and alone.**
- **Answer the employer's questions honestly and briefly.** Don't talk about personal matters unless you are asked. Do tell about

your qualifications completely—without exaggeration. Your job is to show why the company should hire you instead of another applicant.

- **If your first interview does not lead to a job offer, don't be discouraged.** Few people get the first job they apply for—and often not the second or third, either.
- **Think about each interview afterwards and decide what you did that made a good impression**—and what you might do better. Then try again. (And don't knock yourself for every mistake you may have made in the interview—you'll do better with practice.)

### Volunteer Work

If you don't find a job in the summer you still can do something useful with your time—and perhaps use the experience to make you a more attractive job applicant in the future.

You can work as a volunteer at a hospital, nursing home, youth center, playground, or in other community services, for example. Helping other people can be personally rewarding, while giving you more experience for a paid job in the future.

### Laws

To protect young workers, state laws require a work permit for most jobs, and restrict the types of jobs young people can hold and the hours they can work. Other laws set minimum wages.

### List of publications mentioned

**Personal Data Record**  
DWSJ-4937-P

**Grooming for Employment**  
DWSJ-4814-P

**Keys to Successful Interviewing**  
DWSJ-6951-P

**Avoid Application Form Errors**  
DWSJ-5913-P

**Guide for the Employment of Minors**  
ERD-4758



The jobs the Wisconsin Job Center tells you about will be ones you can hold legally, and that will pay at least the minimum wage that applies to that employer.

When you look on your own, be sure you accept only work you are allowed to do, and are paid as much as the law requires.

A work permit is required for each job you have, if you are under age 18 and the job does not involve agricultural or domestic service. Your school counselor can tell you where work permits are issued in your area.

To obtain your work permit, be prepared to furnish the permit officer with the following:

- Proof of age (a birth record or baptismal certificate will do).
- Letter from the employer stating his or her intention to employ you.
- Letter from a parent or guardian consenting to the employment (or the parent or guardian may countersign the employer's letter).
- A permit fee of \$1. (This is to be paid by the employer. If you pay the fee, the employer must reimburse you not later than your first paycheck.)

For more information on provisions of Wisconsin's child labor laws, contact the State Equal Rights Division, 201 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53702 or 819 N. 6th St., Milwaukee, WI 53203. Ask for a copy of **"Guide for the Employment of Minors,"** publication ERD-4758.

### Taxes

Under certain conditions, youth holding summer jobs need not have taxes withheld from their paychecks. To determine whether your expected earnings qualify you for this exemption, contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). If you qualify, fill out IRS Form W-4, available from your employer.

### Social Security

You do not need a Social Security number to obtain a job, but you must have one to get paid.

Since it may take six to eight weeks to receive your number once you apply, it is a good idea to apply as early as possible. To get a number, you do not have to wait until you reach a certain age, decide you want to find work, or have a firm job offer.

You will need two forms of identification to get a Social Security number. One must be either a birth or baptismal certificate. The other may be a school ID, report card, club membership card, or medical record. Both pieces of identification must be the originals.

Go to a local Social Security office to apply, or write and ask for Form SS-5. See government listings in the telephone book under "U.S. Government" or "Social Security."

### Don't Drop Out

A final word of caution. If you are fortunate enough to find a good paying job that you enjoy, don't "drop out" of school when classes resume in the fall.

Many who have will tell you that it was a mistake. They know now that a high school education is vital if they are to keep increasing their earnings in the years ahead.